



## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### **U.S. Census Bureau**

#### **Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; State and Local Government**

##### **Finance Collections**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Census Bureau, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** To ensure consideration, written comments must be submitted on or before (insert 60 days after publication).

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at [jjessup@doc.gov](mailto:jjessup@doc.gov)).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Dale C. Kelly, Chief, International Trade Management Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Room 5K185, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20233; or by email [dale.c.kelly@census.gov](mailto:dale.c.kelly@census.gov).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

##### **I. Abstract**

The Census Bureau plans to request clearance for the collection tools necessary to

conduct the public finance program, which consists of an annual collection of information and a quinquennial collection in the census years ending in “2” and “7”. During the upcoming three years, we intend to conduct the 2017 Census of Governments - Finance and the 2018 and 2019 Annual Surveys of State and Local Government Finances.

The Census of Governments- Finance and Annual Surveys of State and Local Government Finances collect data on state government finances and estimates of local government revenue, expenditure, debt, assets, and pension systems nationally and within state areas. The surveys include the Annual Survey of State Government Finances, the Annual Survey of Local Government Finances, and the Annual Survey of Public Pensions. Data are collected for all agencies, departments, and institutions of the fifty state governments and for a sample of all local governments (counties, municipalities, townships, and special districts). Data for school districts are collected under a separate survey. In the census year, equivalent data are collected from all local governments. These three separate data collections are necessary to create the comprehensive financial picture for state and local governments. The combined data are released as part of the State and Local Government Finance statistical series. The three collections also produce individual data products that focus on state governments, local governments and public pensions in greater detail than the combined financial series as a by-product of their collections for the combined data series.

The Census Bureau provides these data to the Bureau of Economic Analysis to develop the public sector components of the National Income and Product Accounts and to the Federal Reserve Board for use in the Flow of Funds Accounts. Other Federal agencies that make use of the data include the Council of Economic Advisors, the Government Accountability Office, and

the Department of Justice. Other users include state and local governments and related organizations, public policy groups, researchers, and private sector businesses.

Statistics are produced as data files in electronic formats. The program has collected comprehensive and comparable governmental statistics since 1957.

Starting with the 2017 collection, the Census Bureau proposes modifying the existing questions concerning actuarial funding of public pension plans for state-administered plans and adding these questions to the survey for locally-administered plans. These changes reflect changes in accounting standards and the needs of data users inside and outside the federal statistical system.

## **II. Method of Collection**

These surveys use multiple modes for data collection including Internet collection with a mailed invitation, telephone, and central collection. Other methods used to collect data and maximize response include collecting state and local government data through submitted financial audits, state financial reports, and comprehensive financial reports.

The Census Bureau developed central collection agreements with state and large local government officials to collect the data from their dependent agencies and report to the Census Bureau as a central respondent. These arrangements eliminate the need for a mail invitation for approximately 5,500 governmental units in a sample year and 36,000 during the Census of Governments. The arrangements reduce burden by greatly reducing the number of people who have to fill out a collection as the data are collected from a centralized source instead of from multiple sources. Currently, the Census Bureau has central collection arrangements to collect

local government data with 27 states and state government data from all 50 states. The Census Bureau continues to expand the conversion of paper submissions into electronic formats by collaborating with state and local governments regarding electronic reporting of central collection data, and encouraging electronic responses from individual governments.

### **III. Data**

*OMB Control Number:* 0607-0585.

*Form Number:* F-5, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-25, F-28, F-29, F-32, and F-42.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission.

*Affected Public:* State and local governments.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 18,568/90,607 sample year/census year.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 2.034/1.643 hours sample year/census year.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 37,767/148,867 hours sample year/census year.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost:* \$0.

*Respondents Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Legal Authority:* Title 13 U.S.C. Sections 161 and 182.

### **IV. Request for Comments**

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including

hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

PRA Departmental Lead, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

**BILLING CODE: 3510-07-P.**

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